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THE CREAM BUSINESS

In one week recently no less than three farmers came to this editor to inquire if I knew of anyone who would buy the butter they had brought to town. Each of them had a bucket of as fine yellow country butter as any one could wish to eat. There was no sale for it. The stores had more butter than would supply the demand, and the price was down. Many of the householders of town have a standing contract the year round for a certain number of pounds of butter each week at a fixed price per pound. Shipping butter has not proved satisfactory. Such being the situation there is poor encouragement toward developing the butter making industry as a farm home industry.

A number of progressive farmers have been shipping sour cream. The start was made two years ago. So satisfactory and profitable has it proven that the number of shippers is growing each week. The price received for unchurned butter fat is usually more per pound than butter sells for and the demand for it is unlimited. Last week the price was 45 cents a pound net to the farmer, less twenty-five cents a cow handling charge by the local farmer's cooperative warehouse. If preferred the farmer can deal direct with the creamery and save this twenty-five

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There is a farmer who lives near Marinton who has four cows, and his weekly cream check is from ten to twelve dollars. He ships two cans of cream a week. If he made this cream into butter he would not realize as much money for it and there would be the trouble of churning and butter fixing and then the item of selling it in a market already over supplied.

Another thing, shipping cream will bring the local butter market up. It is a club in the hands of the farmer if he chooses to take advantage of it. When butter is scarce, the demand brings up the price.

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Many a Pocahontas county farmer has moved away to a community where they produce and sell milk and cream. Others have said that if some good angel would put in a creamery plant here they would go into the milk and cream business. The truth of the matter is that we have already a better market for cream than if we had an expensive creamery plant, with heavy overhead, keeping out a miserable existence until there were cows in the county to supply a sufficient volume of milk to make a creamery a profitable venture.

The conclusion of the matter is that the output of butter is fixed by the strength and willingness and opportunity of the women folks to make butter and the demand for it by local market often over supplied. The output of cream is fixed by the number of cows the farm will support and the willingness to milk; the demand for cream is increasing all the time.

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